



# New London Public Schools

134 Williams Street \* New London, Connecticut 06320-5296 \* (860) 447-6000 \* Fax: (860) 447-6016

Christopher P. Clouet, Ed. D.  
Superintendent of Schools

March 19, 2009

Judiciary Committee  
Testimony in support of House Bill 6452, An Act Concerning Discrimination  
Dr. Christopher Clouet, Superintendent of the New London Public Schools

My name is Christopher Clouet and I am writing to you today in support of HB 6452, An Act Concerning Discrimination. As the Superintendent of the New London Public Schools, I am in full support of this bill as written. The New London Public Schools is an urban district with approximately 3,077 students. 82% of our student population is minority, an estimated 30% of our students speak a second language and a high percentage of our students are at-risk.

The New London Public Schools' mission states that we shall provide an equitable, relevant and quality education which enables students in a diverse community to make a responsible impact on society. It shall maintain a coordinated K-12 program designed to improve academic achievement and lead students to reason, solve problems, be creative, to become lifelong, self directed learners who are knowledgeable about the world and their place in it.

This mission is not restricted by the academic experience, but instead, takes into account the real life skills children will need to survive and thrive in our multi-cultural and diverse world. The way we implement our policies and treat both our staff and our students sends an important message to our youth about what is acceptable in society. When we chose to treat each other with equity and dignity, our children learn the appropriate lessons. When we choose to discriminate against one another, children learn this lesson also. Therefore, I had grave concerns when I heard there were discussions in the past about amending the bill to exclude teachers, or make exceptions for them, from the important protections outlined in the bill.

As is the case with any changes schools must address, districts have successfully written and integrated new policies and procedures to ensure thoughtful implementation. A teacher transitioning would be no different. Because teacher transitioning has already successfully occurred in schools and universities both within Connecticut, as well as around the country, there are model policies which outline how to: inform parents, students and other interested parties, as well as specific training and resources to guide the process. We have reviewed some of these model policies and are confident that they contain all the necessary elements to ensure the safety of the teacher transitioning and minimizing any disruption to the learning environment.

Therefore, I strongly urge you to pass HB 6452 as it is written so that all people are protected regardless of their profession. Such action will underscore the importance of teachers and their value as members of our communities

Sincerely,

Christopher P. Clouet, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools